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ABSTRACT

The psychological environment of a college is determined by the inner needs of the students and environmental press, i.e. the stresses, conformity-demanding influence, and rewards of the college. To determine the psychological environment at the Agricultural and Technical College at Delhi, 100 males and 85 females were administered the College Characteristics Index during spring 1969. This index is composed of 30 scales that measure various intellectual and non-intellectual factors. Standard scores were derived from individual raw scores and plotted on factor score profile sheets that indicated norms based on students from 32 colleges. Plottings for the total group as well as various subgroups, such as males and females and selected program areas, were presented. Comparisons were also made among Delhi students and those from Hudson Valley, Rockland, and Onetona Colleges. It was found that the scores of the Delhi students were significantly lower than the norm group on the factors of aspiration level, intellectual climate, student dignity, academic climate, academic achievement, and self-expression. It was emphasized that these findings do not necessarily, however, represent anything good or bad about the college; the factor scores must be interpreted in terms of the purpose of the college. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (MB)

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A DESCRIPTION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT OF STUDENTS AT THE AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE AT DELHI

by

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May 1969

JC 690 331

INTRODUCTION

The college community may be regarded as a system of pressures, practices, and policies intended to influence the development of students toward the attainment of institutional objectives. The destructive atmosphere of a college and the differences between colleges may be attributable in part to the different ways in which such systems can be organized-to subtle differences in rules and regulations, rewards and restrictions, classroom climate, patterns of social activity, and in other media through which the behavior of the individual student is shaped (Stern, p. 132).

PURPOSE

It is the general aim of this study to describe the psychological environment of the students at the Agricultural and Technical College at Delhi, and more specifically, those residing in DuBois and Murphy Halls.

As one surveys the literature on the topic it seems as though little has been done in the area of describing the environment of the junior college. "Researchers of campus environments have, for the most part, neglected the junior college" (Herrscher, p. 1).

The psychological environment may be considered to be made up of inner needs of the student and environmental press. Emphasis will be on first order environment factors, which are formed by combining the various environmental press.

Press may be interpreted as stresses, rewards and conformity-demanding influences of the college. Press are the rules and regulations, personnel policies, classroom practices, activities, traditions and interests of students. The press of the environment, as a student sees it, defines what he must cope with and clarifies for him the direction his behavior must take if he is to find satisfaction and reward within the dominant culture of the college (Webb & Crowder, p.1).

THE COLLEGE CHARACTERISTIC INDEX

In this study the press are evaluated by responses of students to the 300 question College Characteristic Index (CCI). The Index contains 30 scales to measure 30 environmental press. Definitions and illustrative items of these 30 environmental press may be found in Appendix A.

The 30 environmental press combine to formulate eleven first order environment factors (See Appendix B). The environment factors are divided into Intellectual and Non-Intellectual Climates.

The Intellectual Climate concerns itself with the academic program including a) staff and facilities, b) standards of achievement set by students as well as faculty, c) opportunities for the development of self-assurance, d) non-custodial student personnel practice and e) an absence of vocationalism.

Factors on the Non-Intellectual Climate are concerned with the organization of student affairs, both academic and social. It also relates with student play and an emphasis on technical and vocational courses.

THE PERSONS TESTED

In the spring of 1969, 100 male and 85 female students were randomly selected from DuBois and Murphy Halls and were administered the College Characteristic Index.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Each of the 30 press scales were scored for each person; then these were combined to arrive at the first order environment factor scores. These raw scores were converted to standard scores and plotted on Factor Score Profile Sheets.

The Factor Score Profile Sheets contain plottings of the total group and various subgroups as male and female, Agriculture, Business, Construction, Engineering Science and Hotel and Restaurant Management. Data is represented respectively on pages 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

COMPARISONS

One of the outstanding questions posed by research is one of comparison. How does one school compare to another.

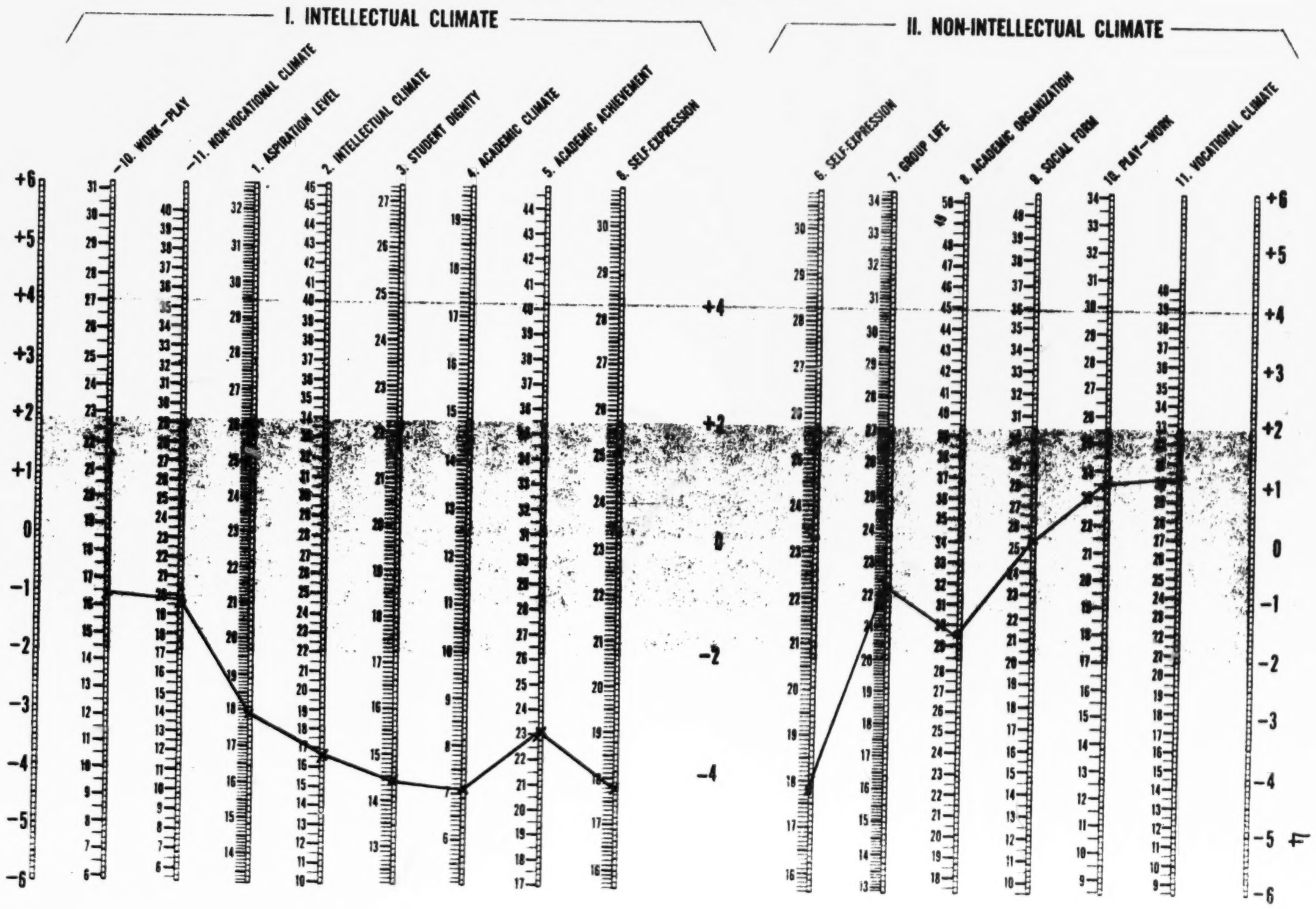
Comparison for the total group at Delhi may be made with Hudson Valley, Rockland (p.11) and also Oneonta (p.12). Comparisons for specific divisions are made for Business and Engineering Science (pp. 7 and 9).

N
185 — DELHI

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X} = 0$, $\sigma = 2$)



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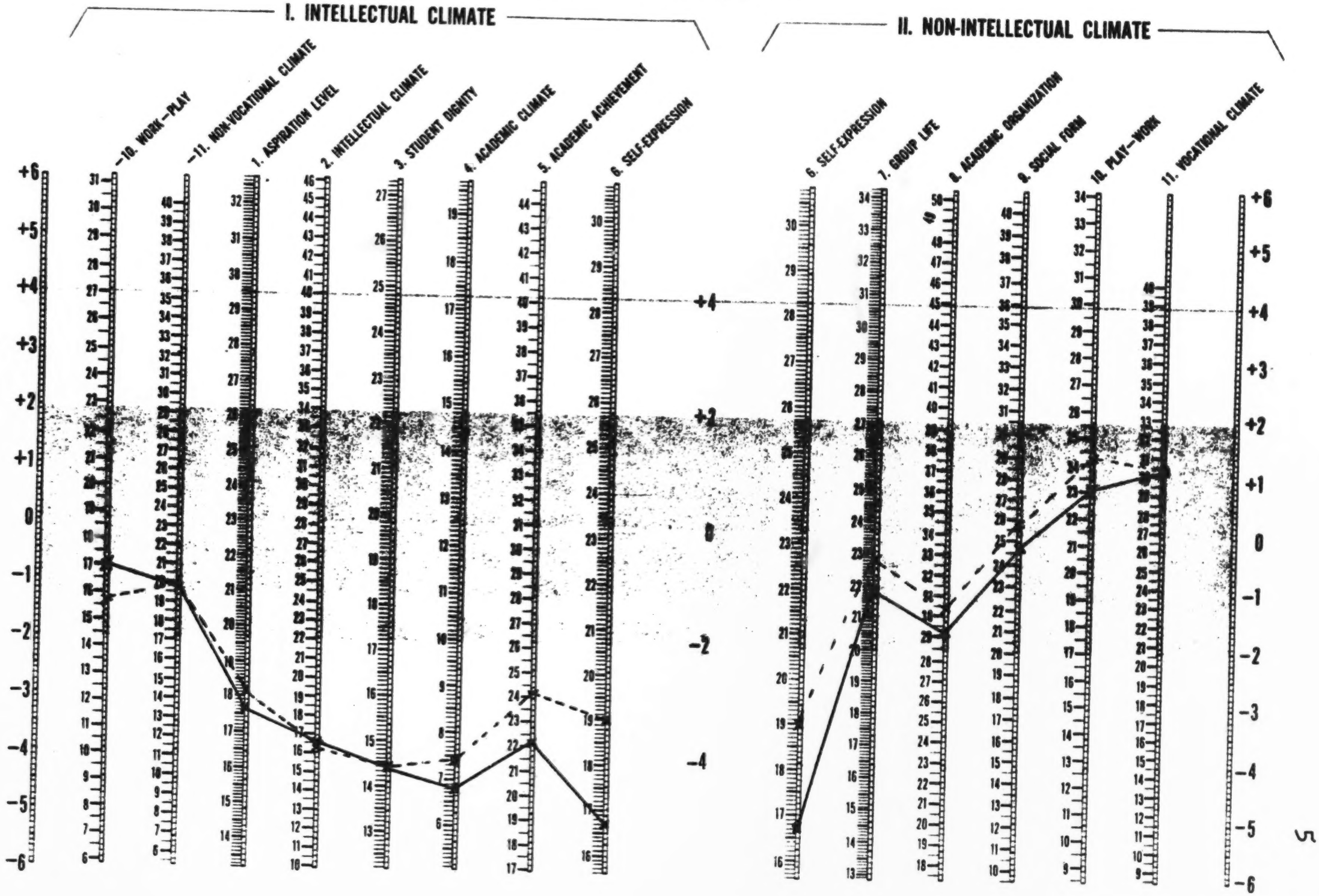
N
100 ——— MALE
85 - - - - - - - FEMALE

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X} = 0$, $\sigma = 2$)



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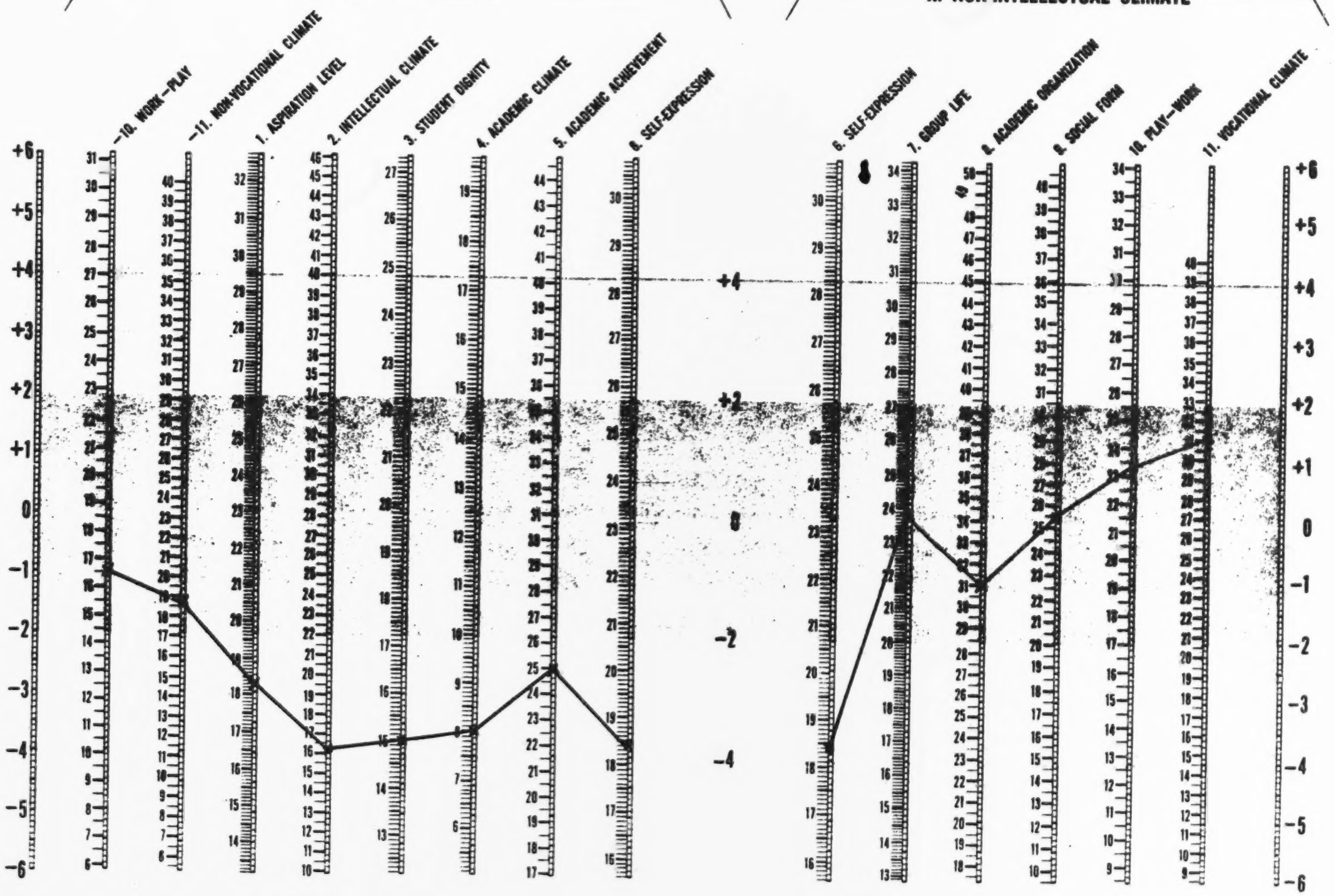
N

40 —— Agriculture

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X} = 0$, $\sigma = 2$)



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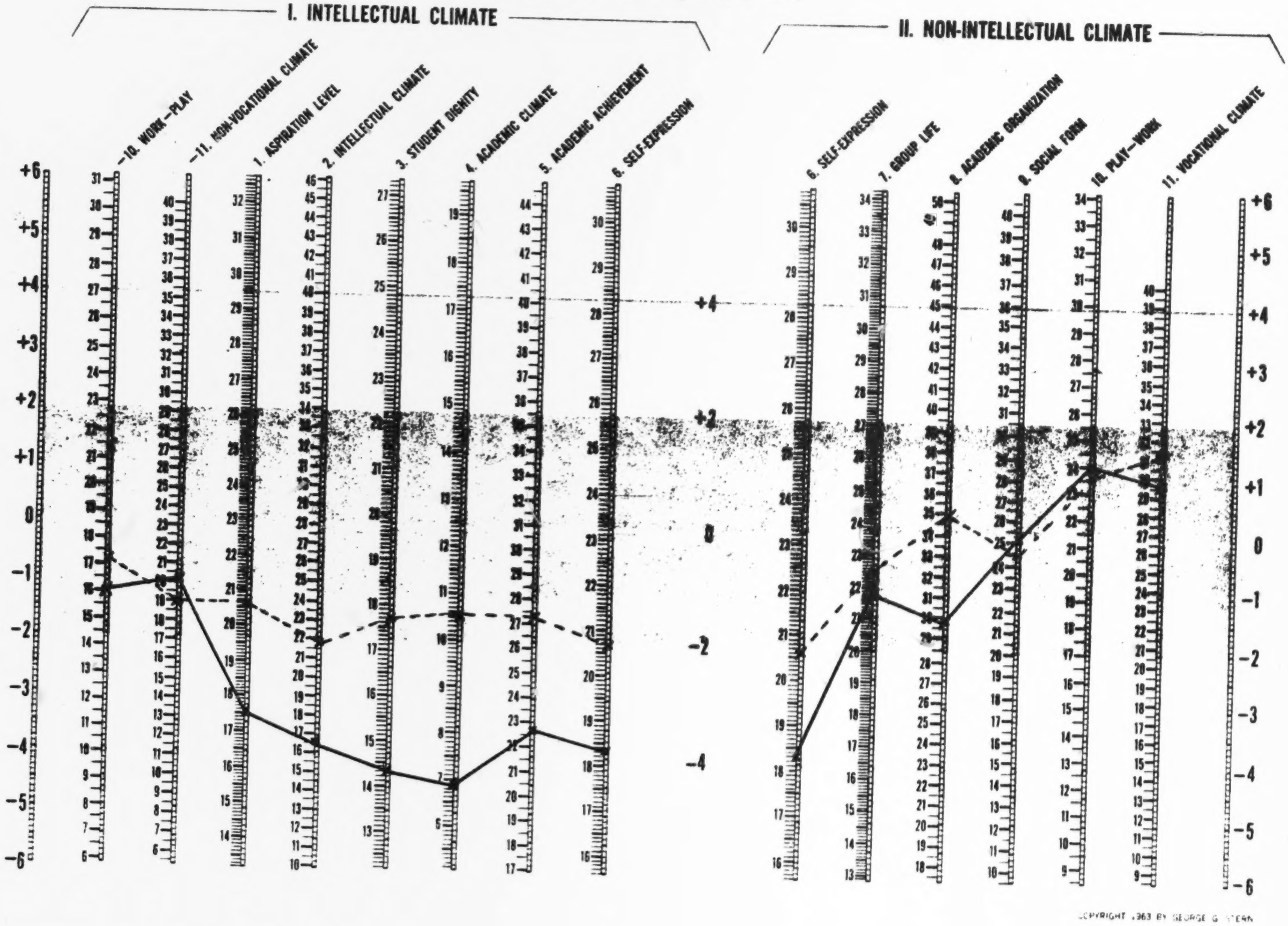
N
77 —— DELHI Business
156 - - - - 3 Schools Bus. Administration

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X}=0$, $\sigma=2$)



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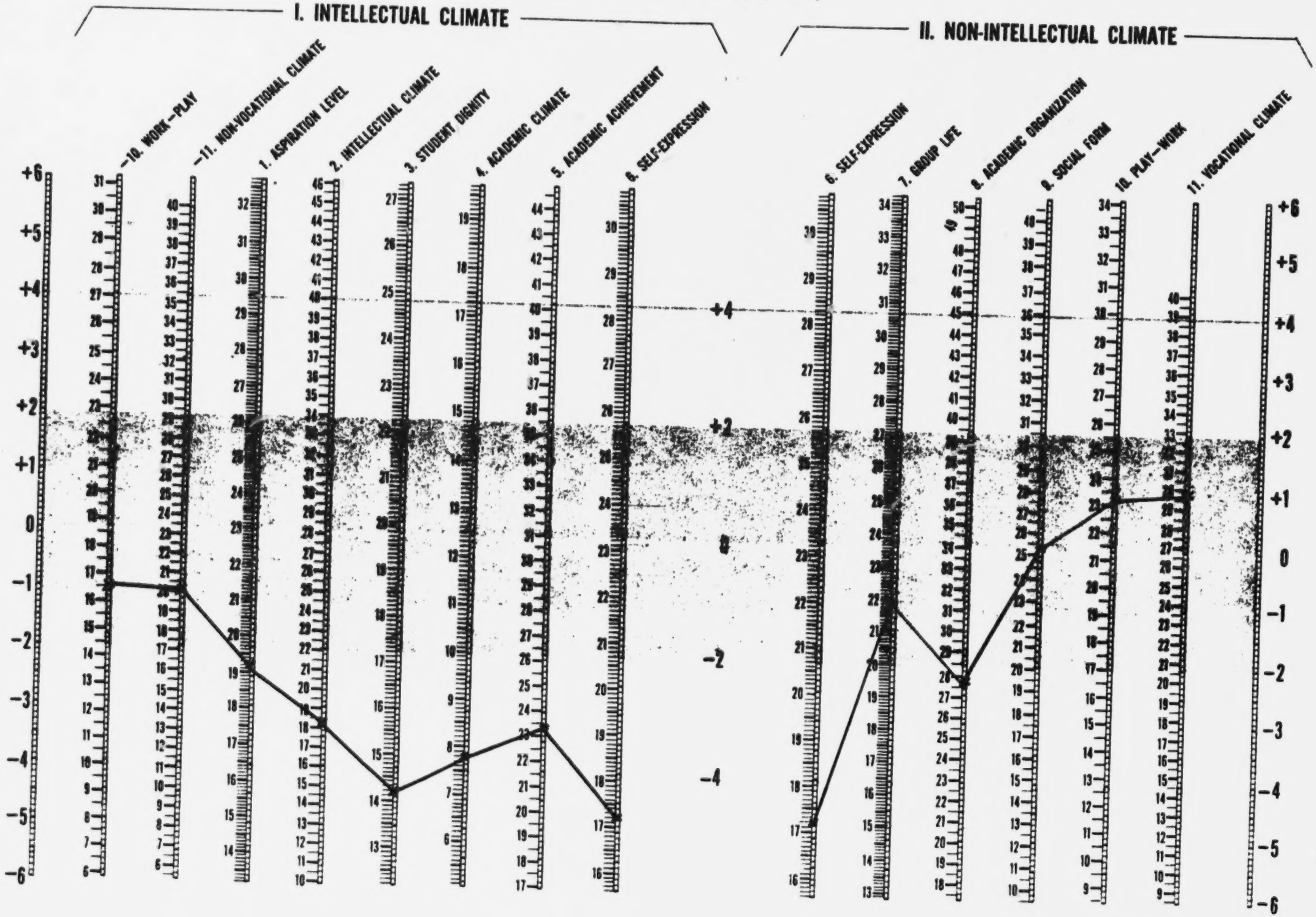
N
22 ——— Construction

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\overline{X}=0$, $\sigma=2$)



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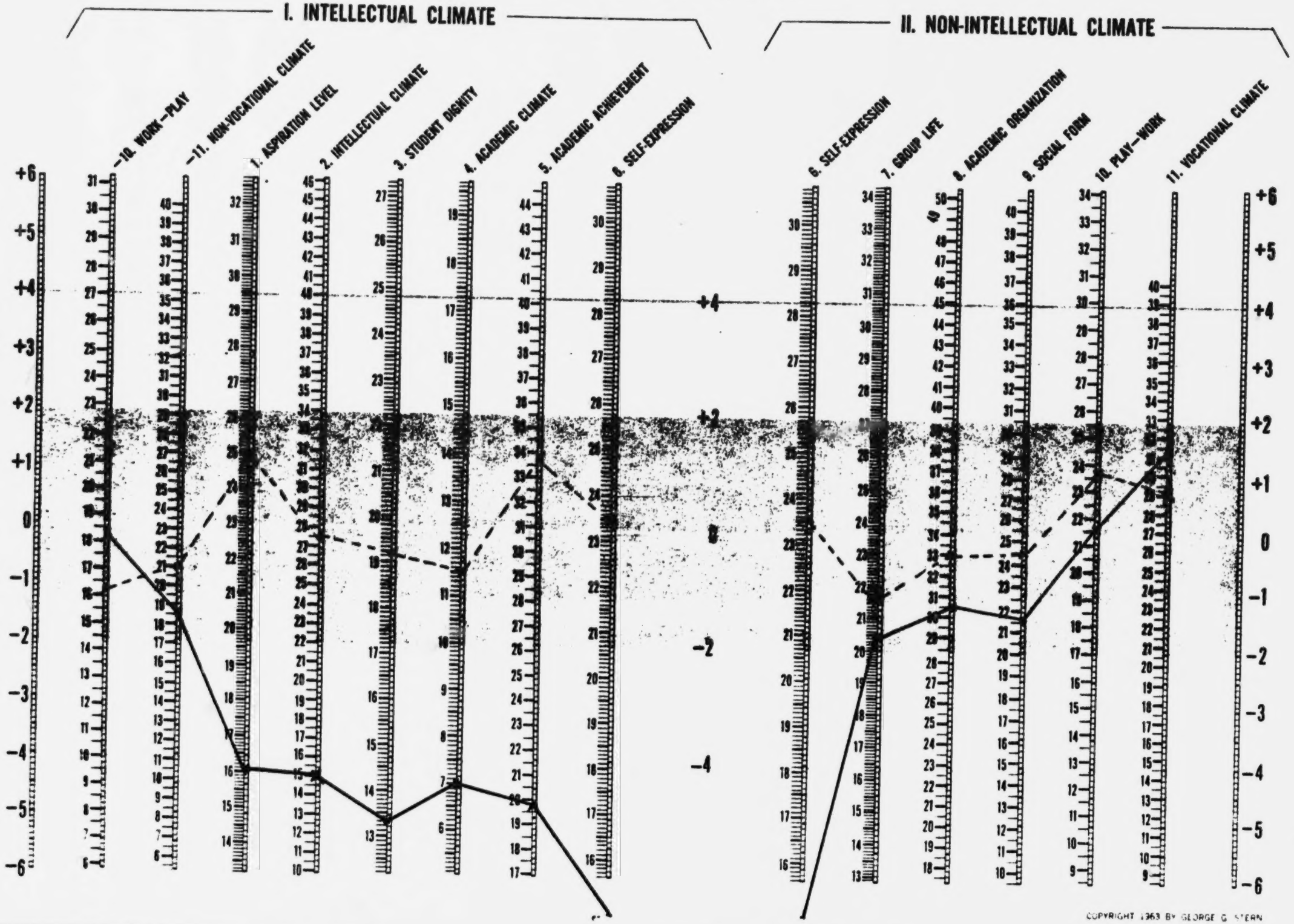
N
7 DELHI
ENGINEERING SCL
240 - - - - 4 SCHOOLS ENGINEERING

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X}=0$, $\sigma=2$)



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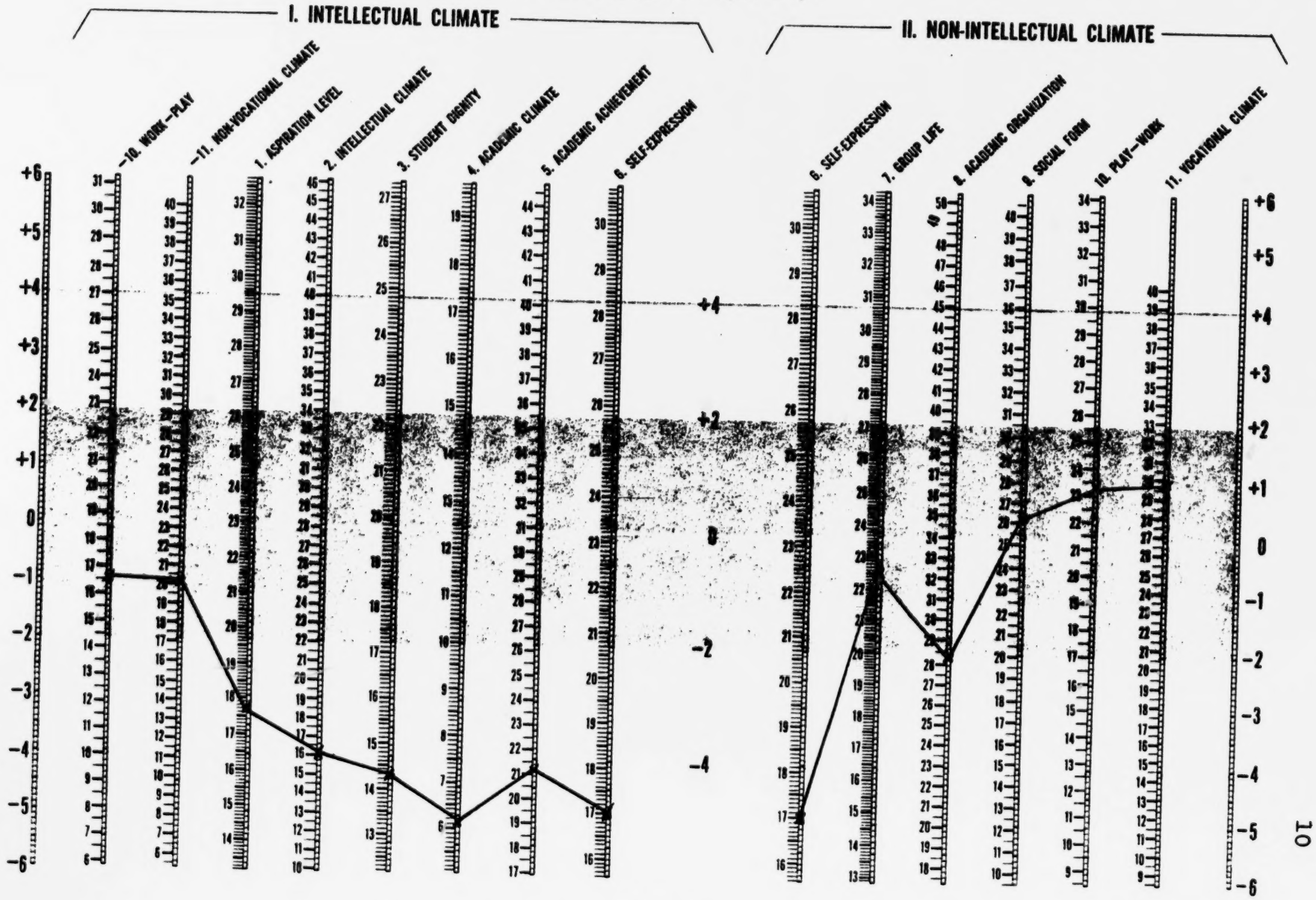
N
39 —— HRIM

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X}=0$, $\sigma=2$)



10

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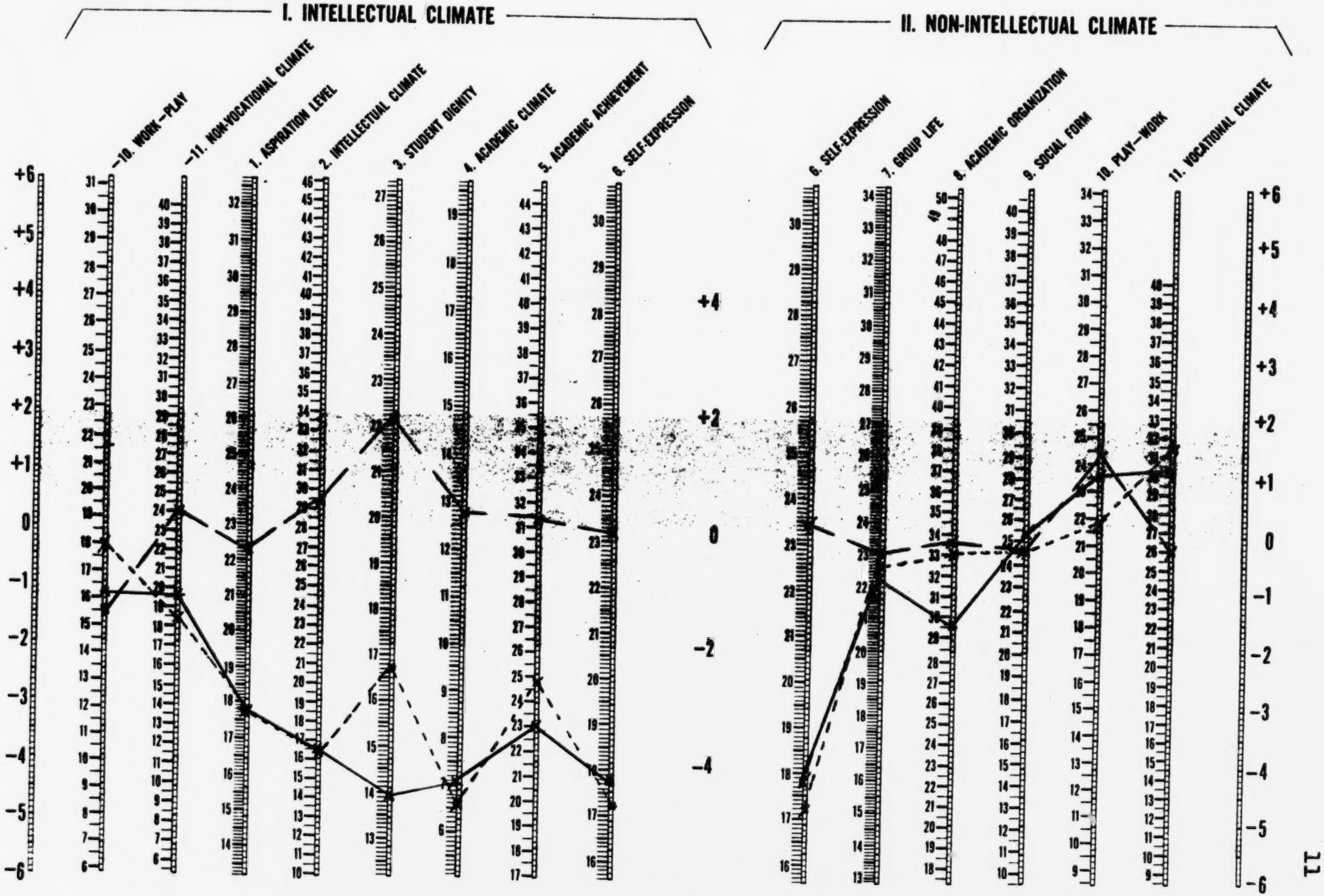
N
185 ——— Delhi
21 — — Rockland
42 - - - - - Hudson Valley

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X}=0$, $\sigma=2$)



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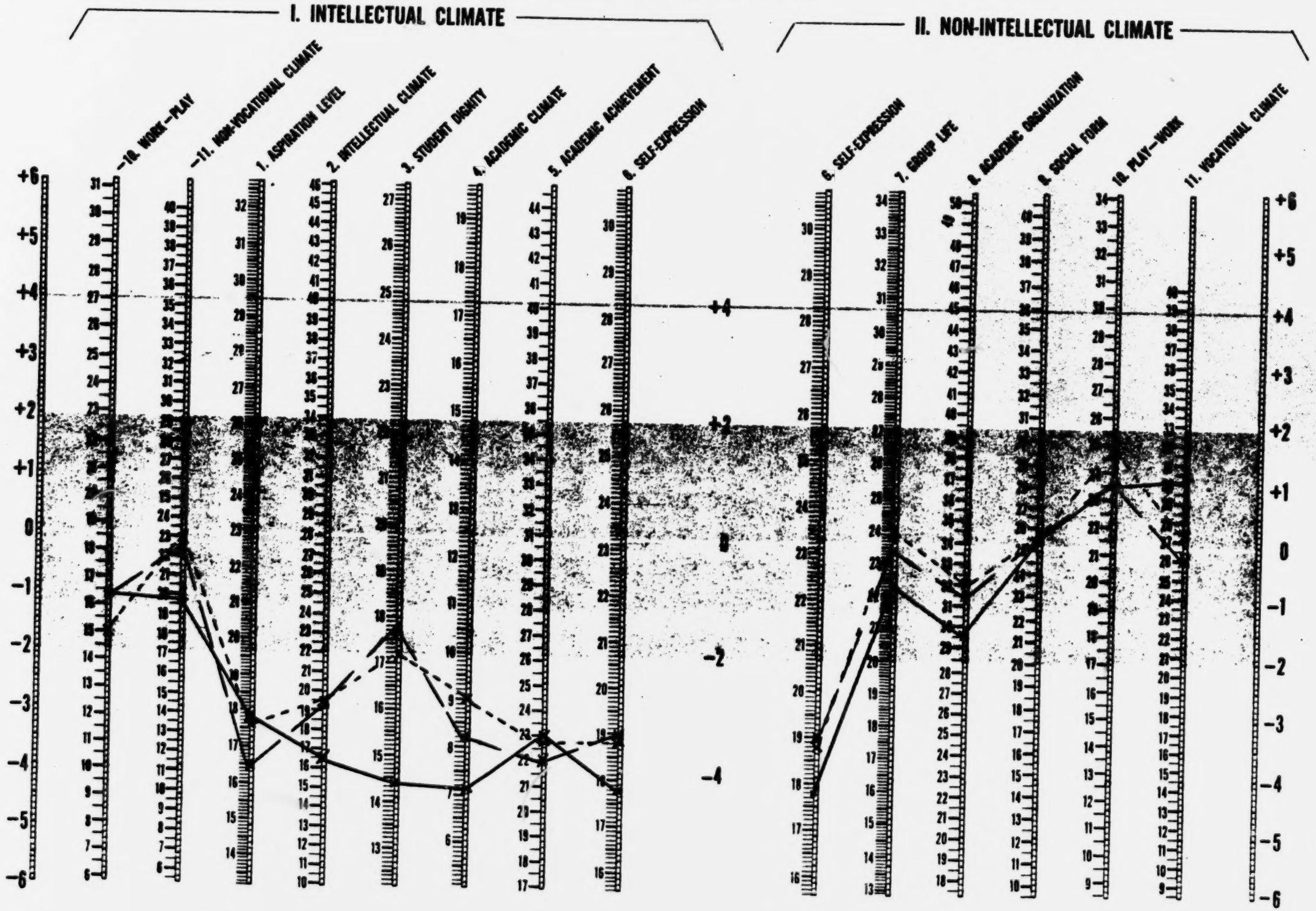
N
185 ——— DELHI
20 - - - - - ONEONTA FR. AND SOPH.
60 — — — ONEONTA JR. & SR.

FACTOR SCORE PROFILE—COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT (CCI)

NORMS BASED UPON 1993 JUNIORS AND SENIORS ENROLLED IN 32 COLLEGES.

STANDARD SCORES ($\bar{X}=0$, $\sigma=2$)



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INTERPRETATION

Looking at the Factor Score Profile Sheet (p. 4) one may see that seven environment factors were found to be statistically significant for the total group at Delhi. Six in the Intellectual Climate and one in the Non-Intellectual Climate.

Discussion will pertain to these factors only. Should the reader wish to interpret other factors he may do so by consulting Appendices A & B.

Aspiration Level: The low score on this factor indicates that the college does not encourage students to set high standards for themselves to any great degree. This would include opportunities to participate in decision-making processes involving the administration of the school and administrative receptivity to change and innovation.

Intellectual Climate: All of the various items contributing to this factor reflect the qualities of staff and plant specifically devcted to scholarly activities in the humanities, arts and social sciences. One may assume the faculty does not encourage students to think about exciting and unusual careers nor is there emphasis on scholarship and critical judgment. Careful reasoning and clear logic are not valued most highly in grading student papers, reports, or discussion.

Student Dignity: A low score on this factor indicates that the institution is not attempting to preserve student freedom and maximize personal responsibility. Student conduct is regulated by means of legislative codes and administrative fiat. Students are not generally treated with the same level of respect accorded any mature adult.

Academic Climate: A low score on this factor indicates that academic excellence is not stressed in staff and facilities in the areas of natural science, social sciences and humanities. The college does not offer many opportunities for students to understand and criticize important works in art, music and drama.

Academic Achievement: When observing the low score on this factor, one may relate it to a lack of high standards set for student achievement. Course work, examinations, honors and similar devices are employed for this purpose. This would imply that there is little competition for grades and standards set by professors are not particularly hard to achieve.

Self Expression: The low score on this factor reflects the attitude that opportunities offered to the student for the development of leadership potential and self assurance are few. Among the activities serving this purpose are public discussions and debates, projects, student drama and musical activities. There are not many student pep rallies, parades, dances or demonstrations. Very few things here arouse much excitement or feeling.

Self Expression: This factor in the Non-Intellectual Climate relates exactly as the above factor.

DISCUSSION

There are some very real limitations to this study based on the size and nature of the sample. However, this does not preclude some meaningful analysis.

One may argue that the deviation area (shaded area) on the profile sheets are based on upperclass students at four year institutions and therefore no real comparison of the psychological environment can be made with junior college freshmen and sophomores. One should look closely however at the profile sheet comparing Delhi and Oneonta (p. 12). One will notice that the profile of Oneonta freshmen and sophomores tested in 1967 did not differ significantly from juniors tested in 1969.

Certain points in relation to the above come to mind: At least for Oneonta, one may assume that perceptions of the psychological environment are similar for both lower and upper class students, therefore perceptions will be similar for whoever is tested. Also, students at Delhi have a similar profile on all factors except student dignity and academic climate. Therefore, one may assume that in most instances, the psychological environment is perceived similarly by students at Delhi and students at Oneonta. Consequently, the psychological environment of at least one four year institution and one two year institution is perceived similarly, so real comparisons can be made.

Any discussion of the psychological environment at Delhi and where it is located when compared with other institutions, should not represent anything good or bad about the college. As Stern states:

> The schools which lack the emphasis on scholarship are not anti-intellectual. But they are oriented towards a different set of objectives. The low schools are largely public institutions, and it is clearly the public which they attempt to serve. They offer a diversity of programs geared to vocational preparation, and attract a very pragmatic achievement-oriented student body....Even the extensive play activities elaborated by the student peer culture in the low schools has its functional relevance in providing social experiences and developing personal ties which anticipate future relationships in business and in the community (Stern,p.3).

Whether any one particular factor score is good or bad can be determined only by those who are responsible for operating the institution. The fundamental questions underlying this study are whether the Agricultural and Technical College at Delhi is achieving its purpose and what meaningful experiences does it wish to give to its students.

Whether the psychological environment described is fulfilling the purposes of the college and whether it is providing the meaningful experiences for students will be left to the reader.

APPENDIX A

A Description of the College Characteristics Index Press Scales

(Note: The following is a brief description of the 30 CCI Scales and sample items from each scale which are marked True (not noted) or False, depending on which answer typically describes the characteristic.)

ABASEMENT: (Aba) Rigidity of student supervision and degree of independence encouraged. Ex.: The school administration has little tolerance for student complaints and protests. There is a lot of apple-polishing here.

ADAPTIVENESS: (Ada) Closeness of supervision. Ex.: Students' midterm and final grades are reported to parents. Students quickly learn what is done and not done on this campus.

ACHIEVEMENT: (Ach) Measured intensity of study, preparation, and competition required in course work. Ex.: The competition for grades is intense. Standards set by the professors are not particularly hard to achieve (False).

AFFILIATION: (Aff) Opportunities for close, friendly reciprocal associations with others. Ex.: Students spend a lot of time together at the snack bars, taverns, and in one another's rooms. The professors really talk with the students, not just at them.

AGGRESSION: (Agg) Degree of hostility and aggression manifest in the environment. Ex.: Students pay little attention to rules and regulations. The faculty and administration are often joked about or criticized in student conversations.

CHANGE: (Cha) Variety in subject matter, composition of student body, student attitudes and activities. Ex.: The students here represent a great variety in nationality, religion and social status. Courses, examinations and readings are frequently revised.

CONJUNCTIVITY: (Cng) Organization of school and course activities. Ex.: In most classes, the preparation of materials is well planned and illustrated. Activities in most student organizations are carefully and clearly planned.

COUNTERACTION: (Ctr) Extent of striving and competition found in the environment. Ex.: Professors often try to provoke arguments in class. People here really play to win, not just for the fun of the game.

DEFERENCE: (Dfr) Extent of submissive behavior found or encouraged in the environment. Ex.: Student publications never lampoon dignified people or institutions. Faculty members and administrators see students only during scheduled office hours or by appointment.

DOMINANCE: (Dom) Opportunity for assertive or manipulative control over others. Ex.: Students are expected to report any violation of rules or regulations. Anyone who knows the right people in the faculty or administration can get a better break here.

EGO ACHIEVEMENT: (E/A) Opportunity for self-dramatizing, idealistic social action; active or fantasied achievement oriented in terms of personal potency, influence, or power. Ex.: Students are encouraged to take an active part in social reforms or political programs. There are many student pep rallies, parades, dances, carnivals, or demonstrations.

EMOTIONALITY: (Emo) A measure of the emotional atmosphere of the environment--intense, active, emotional expression. Ex.: Most students get extremely tense during exam periods. Very few things here arouse much excitement or feeling (False).

ENERGY: (Eny) Degree of intense, sustained vigorous effort encouraged or observed. Ex.: Discussions get quite heated, with a lot of display of feeling. Faculty members put a lot of enthusiasm and energy into their teaching.

EXHIBITIONISM: (Exh) Measure of self-display and attention-seeking behavior found in the environment. Ex.: There is a lot of interest here in student theatrical groups. Public debates are held frequently.

FANTASIED ACHIEVEMENT: (F/A) Opportunity for expression of dreams of success in achieving extraordinary personal recognition, distinction, and power. Ex.: Many famous people are brought to the campus for lectures, concerts, student discussions, etc. The faculty encourages students to think about exciting and unusual careers.

HARMAVOIDANCE: (Har) Extent to which the environment is one in which students avoid the possibility of harm or danger. Ex.: There is an extensive program of intramural sports and informal athletic activities. Initiations and class rivalries sometimes get a little rough (False).

HUMANISM: (Hum) Emphasis and expression placed on the humanities and social sciences. Ex.: The library is exceptionally well equipped with journals, periodicals, and books in the social sciences. The school offers many opportunities for students to understand and criticize important works in art, music, and drama.

IMPULSION: (Imp) Extent of impulsive, spontaneous, impetuous, unreflected behavior. Ex.: Spontaneous student rallies and demonstrations occur frequently. New fads and phrases are continually springing up among the students.

NARCISSISM: (Nar) A preoccupation with self. Ex.: Students take a great deal of pride in their personal appearance. Proper social forms and manners are important here.

NURTURANCE: (Nur) Extent of support and sharing found in the environment. Ex.: There is a great deal of borrowing and sharing among students. This school has a reputation for being friendly.

OBJECTIVITY: (Obj) Extent of open-mindedness and objectivity found or encouraged. Ex.: No one needs to be afraid of expressing extreme or unpopular views in this school. The school has an excellent reputation for academic freedom.

ORDER: (Ord) Organization of the immediate physical environment, with a pre-occupation with neatness, order, arrangement, and meticulous detail. Ex.: Student papers and reports must be neat. Classes meet only at their regularly scheduled time and place.

PLAY: (Ply) Pursuit of amusement and entertainment. Ex.: The big college events draw a lot of student enthusiasm and support. Everyone has a lot of fun at this school.

PRAGMATISM: (Pra) Interest in practical, concrete achievement for more-or-less immediately tangible ends. Ex.: It is important socially here to be in the right club or group.

REFLECTIVENESS: (Ref) Opportunity for discussion, evaluation, and individual creative activity. Ex.: Books dealing with psychological problems and personal values are widely read and discussed. There are many facilities and opportunities for individual creative activity.

SCIENTISM: (Sci) Emphasis on the natural and physical sciences. Ex.: Course offerings and faculty in the natural sciences are excellent. Many of the natural science professors are actively engaged in research.

SENTIENCE: (Sen) Opportunity for expression in the artistic and aesthetic parts of life found or encouraged in the environment. Ex.: There is a lot of interest here in poetry, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, etc. Concerts and art exhibits always draw big crowds of students.

SEX: (Sex) Opportunity for boy-girl relations. Ex.: There is a lot of informal dating during the week--at the library, snack bar, movies, etc. Nearly everyone has a date for the weekend.

SUCCORANCE: (Succ) Extent of help and guidance received in the environment. Ex.: Students commonly share their problems. The professors go out of their way to help you.

UNDERSTANDING: (Und) Emphasis on scholarship, basic research, breadth of understanding, perspective, and critical judgment. Ex.: There is a lot of emphasis on preparing for graduate work. Careful reasoning and clear logic are valued most highly in grading student papers, reports, or discussions.

APPENDIX B

First Order College Environment Factors (CCI)

I. INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE

Work - Play
(Inversion) Sexuality, Risktaking, Play, Impulsiveness

Non-Vocational Climate
(Inversion) Practicalness, Puritanism, Deference, Order, Adaptiveness

Aspiration Level
Counteraction, Change, Fantasied Achievement, Understanding

Intellectual Climate
Reflectiveness, Humanities - Social Sciences, Sensuality, Understanding, Fantasied Achievement

Student Dignity
Objectivity, Assurance, Tolerance

Academic Climate
Humanities - Social Sciences, Science

Academic Achievement
Achievement, Energy, Understanding, Counteraction, Conjunctivity

Self Expression
Ego Achievement, Emotionality, Exhibitionism, Energy

II. NON-INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE

Self Expression
Ego Achievement, Emotionality, Exhibitionism, Energy

Group Life
Affiliation, Supplication, Nurturance, Adaptiveness

Academic Organization
Blame Avoidance, Order, Conjunctivity, Deliberation, Deference, Narcissism

Social Form
Narcissism, Nurturance, Adaptiveness, Dominance, Play

Play - Work
Sexuality, Risktaking, Play, Impulsiveness

Vocational Climate
Practicalness, Puritanism, Deference, Order, Adaptiveness

APPENDIX C

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